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From: StClair, Christie
Sent: Wed 8/12/2015 1:49:57 PM
Subject: Statement: Water Monitoring, Sampling and Data Collection

Water Monitoring, Sampling and Data Collection

EPA teams are deployed throughout the Animas River corridor collecting data. We collected water quality samples from nine locations in the river near intakes for Aztec, Farmington, Lower Valley Water Users Association, Morning Star Water Supply System and the North Star Water User Association. Each of these locations will continue to monitor as the release makes its way past these areas. Our Mobile Command Post arrived in Farmington on August 9. At the request of New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED), we are sending additional scientists and technicians to New Mexico to assist with water quality monitoring, sampling and outreach.

Collection, transport and lab analysis of metals in water is complex and time consuming. Workers at the lab and data experts are working continuously to evaluate and summarize the data.

The incident, which occurred on August 5, caused a spike in concentrations of total and dissolved metals as the contaminated mine water moved downstream. These concentrations began to trend toward pre-event conditions in the vicinity of the spill by the following day. We continue to monitor river conditions at multiple locations to detect trends. Rain events and variations in stream flows can cause the pH and metals concentrations to rise and fall. EPA is working with state and local government officials to determine when to reopen both drinking water intakes and open the river for recreation.

The contaminant plume is depositing sediments and we are beginning to assess the impacts of the sediment.

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